Welcome to the Jungle

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Welcome to the Jungle

by Zetaglobin

Summary

Disclaimer This was written before it was revealed that Satsuki and Ryuko were siblings. I continued this fic after the reveal, as I never planned for them to be related. However, I ended up stopping as I felt uncomfortable ignoring canon for the purpose of shipping . Disclaimer End

Ryuko's a delinquent who bends the law in the interest of protecting herself and long-time friend Mako. Satsuki's heir to the most infamous crime syndicate in the country. Their first meeting falls under interesting circumstances.

Calling Card

The sound of Mako's high-pitched screaming is more often than not the first thing that wakes up Ryuko in the mornings.

Despite how routine it's become, Ryuko still jolts out of bed nearly every time, kicking off the covers, and blindly stumbling in the direction of her housemate's voice, ready to pulverize any punk stupid enough to break in. And despite the fact that the latter is rarely EVER the cause of Mako's agitation, Ryuko's already made it down the hall on this particular morning.

"Christ, the sun's not even up yet!" Ryuko groans, feeling her racing heart slow as she spots Mako seated on the rickety table in the kitchen.

"Ryuko Ryuko you have to look at this!" She's practically vibrating in excitement, frantically jabbing her finger at the front page article. Ryuko slips the paper from her, skimming it simply to humor Mako. She blinks a few times, trying to make sense of the letters blurring before her bleary eyes. When the image finally comes into focus, she nearly screams herself.

"Holy shit.." She breaths, sucking in a surprised gasp. Glowering up at Ryuko is her own battered face; in the picture she's sporting a nasty looking shiner, along with a blossoming of purple bruises down her chin. But at least she's staring straight into the camera defiantly.

"You're gonna be like a celebrity now!" Mako exclaims, bumping shoulders with Ryuko to get another look at the article. Ryuko grumbles in response, feeling a stab of irritation once her gaze finds the title.

"Local delinquent takes on the world? God they always blow everything out of proportion. All I did was scrap around with some assholes. They didn't even hit that hard." She remarks, reaching up to brush the yellowing skin around her eye.

"Keep on reading" Mako prompts.

"Last Saturday a wild brawl broke out between neighborhood terror, Ryuko Matoi, and lackeys of the famed Kiryuin syndicate-wait what?!" Ryuko angrily throws the paper back down, "Ok first of all, how the hell did they get my name?! And more importantly, those guys were *Kiryuin's?"* The name is enough to send a fresh wave of rage through her being.

Mako bobs her head up and down, "Isn't it incredible? This is like something out of a movie! You're the lone protagonist, facing up against an entire army of bad guys, fighting your way up to the top-"

Ryuko cuts her off by gently placing her hand over Mako's mouth, "I'm going for a walk." She mutters, yanking a ragged letterman jacket off the coat rack and storming outside before the other girl can stop her.

The dawn air is brisk, but not unpleasantly so. The wind easily slices through the tattered fabric of her coat, but at this point it's a welcome distraction from the storm brewing in her mind. "It really had to be the Kiryuins didn't it? Of all the toes I could've stepped on, it had to be the most prestigious fucking manicured, heel-wearing toes?" Ryuko pauses midstride, sending a nearby beer can sailing through the air with a clumsy kick.

Luckily the streets are desolate; the last thing she wants is an article about the 'local neighborhood terror' yelling to herself and assaulting bits of litter. She feels the rage bubble up again, and takes off down the street, sprinting hard. The slap of her sneakers against the pavement fills the silence, and for a solid five minutes, before her legs buckle from the impromptu run, Ryuko feels a sense of peace.

When she sinks to her knees before a storefront the sun is just beginning to rise, bathing the town in an uncharacteristically warm orange glow. Ryuko's thoughts drift back to the article as she's drawing in labored breaths. She's heard of the Kiryuuins before. Anyone with 2 seconds of access to television has probably heard of the Kiryuins. All the tales of extravagant heists, unnecessary civilian casualties, always dressed up in a pretty pink alibi-it's enough to make her see red.

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By the time she returns home it's midday. Mako's out front, dusting bits of chipped paint off the weather-worn porch with a ferocious look in her eyes.

"Hey I'm sorry for dashing out before!"

Mako's head jerks up, and for a split second she looks panicked-like a kid caught with her hand in the cookie jar. "Ah you're back already!"

"You didn't think I'd be gone all day did you?" Ryuko teases, "What's got you all worked up anyway?"

Mako gives a stiff shrug in response, "Just doing some tidying up. More importantly, are you alright? You must be really scared about that whole Kiryuin thing.."

"Me? Hell no. I was just pissed that I had to share my front cover glory with that stupid name." Ryuko gives her a reassuring pat on the shoulder, frowning when her fingers brush over tensely coiled muscles. She's definitely hiding something.

Without bothering to prod any further, Ryuko simply moves toward the door, figuring that whatever it is, she'll discover soon enough. Perhaps her housemate has brought home another stray animal, in the hopes of convincing her that it's not a flea-ridden mongrel, maybe she attempted to cook with explosive ingredients-Ryuko mulls the ideas over in her head, grinning at the sheer ridiculousness of them. Her smile drops the moment she swings the door open.

There's an intruder in the house. A long-haired, porcelain skinned, blue eyed, *gorgeous* woman-but still an intruder. She's sitting at the dining room table, somehow managing to look pristine and poised against the crumbling backdrop of the kitchen. The stranger looks up from the cup of tea balanced on her pinky, glaring up at Ryuko as if *she* were the one being infringed upon.

"W-who the hell are you?!" Ryuko finally finds her voice, breaking the silent staring contest.

"You're late." The woman replies curtly, casting her glance down to examine the chipped cup in her hand, "I don't enjoy being made to wait-" By the time the last syllable leaves her lips, Ryuko's already charging across the room.

Ryuko closes the distance in seconds, sending the table tumbling away with a rough shove. She grabs a fistful of the fabric lining the other woman's neck, sneering in satisfaction as her blunt nails catch between the intricately woven threads.

"I asked you a goddamn question."

The intruder raises a single eyebrow at the quick change in events, but seems otherwise unfazed; barely flinching as Ryuko roughly yanks her forward. She stretches her arm, gingerly setting the tea onto the ground.

"Satsuki Kiryuin." And with that, the woman lashes out, driving her fist into Ryuko's side. Ryuko grunts and staggers back a few steps, surprised by both the name and the sudden explosion of pain beneath her ribs. Satsuki stands, brushing aside the hands scrabbling to latch onto her collar again, and lands several more solid blows. Ryuko fights to keep her expression steady, raising her arms to block each punch just a second too late. She grits her teeth, finally falling into a proper fighting stance, when a sharp uppercut slams into her jaw and sends her reeling.

Satsuki lunges, taking hold of Ryuko's wrists, and pins her against the wall.

"You're far less polished a fighter than I had hoped. Perhaps the media really can't be trusted." Satsuki muses, holding Ryuko in place with ease. There's a sharp metal tang welling in Ryuko's mouth, and she ducks her head away, smiling when a trickle of blood from her lips drops onto Satsuki's shoes. The grimace she receives for it is well worth the kick it earns her.

"Is that why you're here? To kill me and mount my head at your family's dinner table?"

Satsuki's mouth pulls together in something that could *almost* be a smile, and she scoffs, "I'm not one to do dirty work. Perhaps we could have discussed this like civil human beings if you hadn't been so privy to aggression."

Ryuko snorts, "Don't give me that shit. My aggression has saved my ass five times over." She twists in Satsuki's grasp, attempting to overwhelm her with sheer strength. Satsuki merely sighs in response, and relents for a moment, only to spin Ryuko around and shove her face first against the wall.

"Bitch!" Ryuko wheezes as the air is pushed from her lungs.

"If you could hold still for a moment and allow me to speak, this would be going over much more smoothly."

Ryuko scoffs, angling her head as much as she can with the hand pressing against the back of her neck, "You have a minute before I call bullshit and kick your ass."

Satsuki's hold on her tightens, but she mutters an agreement to Ryuko's proposal. "According to the one watching us from the window, you left without examining my calling card."

"Mako! Fuck, you didn't hurt her did you?!"

"Of course not. Although I must say, I'm not sure how the two of you function. You stormed out before her scatter-brain remembered to show you what *else* arrived in the mail." With that, Satsuki takes a step back, releasing a stunned but still fuming Ryuko, and drops a silver card onto her lap.

Hands still trembling from the fight, Ryuko brings the card up to eye level, squinting at the obnoxiously intricate designs swirling over the borders. There isn't much actual substance to it; a simple "We should chat" written in impeccable penmanship, signed with the unmistakable emblem of the Kiryuin syndicate.

"I hope you realize this wouldn't have stopped me from trying to pummel you." Ryuko remarks, giving the card a final glance over before crumpling it into a ball and tossing it aside.

"Well the point I was trying to convey seems to be lost regardless, so I'll try to simplify things for you. I'm not here to assassinate you in the family name."

Ryuko snorts in disbelief, "Then what is it? Don't tell me this is some weird courting ritual."

"Not even in your most wildly fantastical dreams. I came here to offer you a deal." Satsuki pauses, waiting for Ryuko to butt in with another jab. When the latter remains quiet, finally looking ready to listen, she continues.

"The head of the family isn't happy. The media is our domain; we rule through the fear we strike in the heart of others, and you, intentionally or not, are threatening that fear. Everyone's got their eyes trained on you, and soon enough the scopes of their guns will be as well."

"So what's the deal then? You're not as crazy about killing me as the rest? You want to make some video of me begging for mercy as PR? Over my dead body."

"I want you offer you a fighting chance."

Puncture Wounds and Punk Rock

Chapter Notes

> Sorry this took so long; life got super busy. Also, I changed the title of this section of the series so apologies for any confusion that might cause. Questions, comments, feedback are all welcome here or at my tumblr: gallowsgirl.tumblr.com

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Ryuko's head is spinning; she's not sure if it's from the knife buried in her hand or the hot breath ghosting over her ear. Satsuki presses closer, her lips brushing against Ryuko's neck.

"Hold still, Matoi" Fuck it's definitely Satsuki.

"S'easier said than done" Ryuko mutters, squirming again in the confined space, jerking her head back as far as the metal walls allow. She grits her teeth as their knees bump, fighting to keep her breathing under control. Satsuki raises her head to shoot her an icy glare, her chin digging into Ryuko's clavicle.

"As brilliant an idea taking cover in the air shaft was, I see you weren't planning very far ahead." Satsuki punctuates the remark with a rough jab.

"Screw you. We're alive aren't we?"

"Alive? Yes. Trapped within an incredibly cramped space with no foreseeable exit? Also yes." Satsuki sighs, adjusting a bit in an attempt to untangle their limbs, "If you were attempting to seduce me then perhaps I'd be more impressed with our current position."

Ryuko scoffs, "You're fucking with my life enough already, I don't need you fucking me as well."

"Littering your sentences with profanity doesn't compensate very well for your blushing."

"Shut your damn mouth it's hot in here and I can barely breath!" Ryuko hisses, mentally cursing herself as she feels her face grow pink at the comment. She shifts a bit, wincing as her hand throbs, "Ow fuck!" She raises her good hand, reaching over Satsuki's back in an attempt to wrench the knife out.

Satsuki fixes her with an incredulous stare, "Have you acquired a sudden craving for permanent nerve damage?"

"No asshole," Ryuko grunts, stretching her fingers to reach the handle, "I have a 'sudden craving' for this to stop hurting like a bitch."

Satsuki swats her hand away, "Quit acting tough. I didn't come here to watch you writhe around like a dying animal. You need proper medical attention."

"Is that what you call it? Bet you just want to drag me back to the Kiryuin mansion and have me executed. How am I gonna go? Gonna tie me to the ceiling and have me beaten senseless? Gonna skin me alive and make me swear loyalty to the Kiryuin name with my dying breath?"

Satsuki's expression remains stoic, "Those have all been done before, so the answer is no."

Ryuko is about to cackle at her own wit when she notices the severity of the other woman's face, "Oh my god you're not joking."

"Afraid not. However, it may reassure you to know that I was also not joking about fixing up that hand of yours." Ryuko shoots her a dubious look, "Matoi if I personally wanted you dead, you'd already be in a body bag. Believe it or not, I do operate under my own agenda."

Ryuko snorts, "Forgive me for assuming that you're all mindless drones of the queen bee."

Satsuki merely brushes her fingers along the handle of the knife, sending a white hot pain shooting up Ryuko's nerves.

"Fucking bitch!" She hisses, shuddering and biting back a scream.

"I'm calling for reinforcements before you bleed out; or worse, before our location is completely compromised."

"F-fine." Ryuko manages.

Satsuki ducks her head a bit, angling her mouth towards the inside of her blazer, speaking into the small microphone tucked within the folds "Alright you got your wish. Get us out of here anyway you can." There's a brief pause of silence before the speaker crackles loudly and a shrill voice replies.

"I knew that little punk couldn't handle it. With pleasure Lady Satsuki."

Before Ryuko can question who the asshole on the other end was, the world around them explodes.

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There's a ringing in her ears. It's dull at first, muffled, as if her head was covered by a pile of blankets. Blankets would be pretty nice right now actually. Ryuko sighs softly at the thought, turning to nuzzle into the soft material pressing against her cheek. The ringing begins to fade, replaced instead by a steady rumbling.

"Finally coming to?"

Ryuko bolts up at the sound of Satsuki's smug voice, all the fog fading from her head. The other woman is watching her with a calm expression, still looking quite serene--even with the layer of ash clinging to her skin and clothing.

"You passed out the moment we got into car," Satsuki explains, once her eyes catch Ryuko's look of bewilderment. "Thankfully you seem as sturdy as you are stubborn. No serious injuries from the bombs. Just watch that hand of yours."

Ryuko immediately glances down at her left hand, sighing in relief to see the knife was removed while she was out. It's wrapped in layers of gauze extending up to her wrist, making it impossible to gauge the damage done. Once she's confirmed that she's in no immediate danger of dying, Ryuko stops her self-inspection and turns her head to assess her surroundings.

It's dimly lit, save for the glow of pink interior lights above their heads. Based solely upon her knowledge of 90's prom movies, Ryuko concludes that they must be in some sort of limo. The seats stretch around the near entirety of the wall, broken up every so often by random appliances, ranging from an ash tray to a fully equipped mini bar.

"Jesus Kiryuin I'm not sure what to ask about first; the bombs or this classy party bus."

"Well both topics fall under the jurisdiction of the one driving at the moment." Satsuki replies, nodding toward the front of the vehicle. Ryuko follows her gaze to the silhouette behind the tinted glass.

"Once she rolls the window down, I'd refrain from referring to Johann as a 'classy party bus"

Ryuko raises an eyebrow, "Johann? What, you mean this luxurious monstrosity?"

"Keep it up Matoi. You're digging your own grave."

"I'm not scared of whoever thought it was a good idea to name a limo Johan." Ryuko retorts, and purely to spite Satsuki, raps against the glass with her foot, "Hey driver! Mind taking your pimp mobile around the city for a bit? I deserve a night out!"

Satsuki shakes her head and sighs, bracing herself against the seat just as the vehicle screeches to a sudden halt. Ryuko yelps in surprise, tumbling forward and slamming into the wall.

"Damn, what the hell?!" She groans, easing herself back into a sitting position. She raises her head just as the window is rolling down, getting her first glimpse Johann's owner.

"If you so much as scuff these windows with your FILTHY fucking feet EVER again, I will shove explosives in every disgusting orifice on your body."

It's the same high pitched voice she heard before the building literally burst into flames. In person it's about ten times more high pitched, and practically grates on her ear drums.

"Matoi, I'd like you to meet our detonation specialist: Ms. Nonon Jakuzure." Satsuki gestures with an exaggerated arm sweep, her lips pulling into an amused smirk.

Ryuko's at a loss for words for a solid thirty seconds. *How could so much annoying be contained in such a tiny being?* Nonon's staring daggers at her; despite her round face and

pink hair she looks terrifying in her own right. Tired of spending the day trading barbs with Satsuki, Ryuko reluctantly backs down.

"Fine. I won't mess up your car anymore." She huffs, planting her feet firmly on the floor and leaning back against the seat. Nonon's eyes widen a bit, and for a moment she looks disappointed with the submission.

"I can't believe you're wasting your time with this hoodlum. She's all bark and no bite." Nonon complains, shooting Satsuki an exasperated glance, "Just like a wild dog."

Ryuko bristles "Sorry if I'm a bit tired after having to sprint out of the building you fucking blew up. You want my bite? Come and get it." She challenges, flashing her teeth for exaggerated effect.

Before Nonon can reply Satsuki interrupts their bickering with a soft cough, "You two get along just as swimmingly as I expected you would." She comments, resting her chin on her palm, "However we should probably continue moving. Time is not on our side."

Nonon sighs, "Yes ma'am." Sending Ryuko one last glare, she turns around once more, settling back into the driver's seat. The car hums back to life and lurches forward, and Ryuko allows herself to relax a bit. As they speed down the road, an uncomfortable silence fills the air, interrupted only by huffs of frustration from Nonon as she drums her fingers on the wheel. Ryuko fidgets, still overwhelmed by the lavish vehicle, and fighting the urge to provoke its insufferable driver. She turns in her seat a bit to glance at Satsuki out of the corner of her eye instead.

The other woman looks unaffected by the hostile atmosphere, peacefully watching the streetlights blur past.

Nonon lets out a particularly loud grumble as they reach a stoplight, and reaches forward to flick a few switches on the dashboard. An elaborate stereo system hums to life, lighting up the front of the car in a soft blue. She turns a few knobs, and the speakers explode with a deafening blast of screams.

Ryuko nearly leaps out of her seat. She brings her hands up to cover her ears after recovering from the initial shock, staring up to grimace into the rearview mirror. Nonon catches her eye and smirks, mercifully reaching forward to lower the volume a few notches.

"Not very punk after all?" She muses, revving the engine as a particularly loud roar rocks the car.

"What is this garbage?!" Ryuko yells over the noise.

"Heavy metal Acapella." Nonon answers, bobbing her head to the beat. "I wouldn't expect a ruffian like you to be able to appreciate the intricacy of Van Canto's work, so save your breath and shut up."

"Oh my god. I didn't know this level of musical snobbery existed." Ryuko scoffs in mock disbelief.

Nonon grins, seeming to take it as a compliment, and continues driving. After a few minutes the garbled mess of yelling finally ends. Ryuko tenses, taking the brief silence between songs to prepare for another ear piercing shriek . Instead, a soft woodwind melody fills the car, gradually accompanying more instruments until an entire orchestral piece is flowing from the speakers.

"Um this is nice." Ryuko offers awkwardly.

"Indeed. This is Nonon's most famous symphony in Eastern Europe." Satsuki agrees, "Although I personally prefer her latest work."

Nonon visibly swells from the praise, making Ryuko want to gag.

"I'm glad you enjoy it so much Lady Satsuki. It was inspired by our latest success. I added more of a part for the percussion section to symbolize my personal contributions."

Satsuki makes a noise that Ryuko can only assume is her laugh, "Your impromptu grenades were quite helpful."

Nonon's practically squirming in her seat, her grin growing impossibly wider with the additional compliment. Ryuko rolls her eyes but keeps her mouth shut, listening to the two discuss music. It isn't until the next song starts that she realizes that Satsuki referred to it as *Nonon's* symphony.

"Hold up! Are you saying you're THAT Nonon Jakazure?!"

Nonon's smile immediately sours at Ryuko's sudden interruption, and she turns a bit in the driver's seat, "I'm the only Nonon I know." She retorts.

"I mean the child prodigy. The Nonon that tours the world and leads orchestras for super prestigious events. The Nonon that conducted at Broadway before she was even in middle school?"

Nonon's grin returns, this time spreading across her face in an arrogant sneer. "Ah you must be quite a fan of mine. My performance at Broadway hasn't been on the air in years. You must have seen my more recent work too? Perhaps you're a member of the fanclub?"

To her absolute horror, Ryuko blushes. "I don't get many channels. You were on a lot when I was younger." Ryuko snaps. "And no I'm not part of your fan club. I just thought you made good music."

"Do you want my autograph?"

"Fuck off. I can't believe I used to think you were cute."

Now it's Nonon's turn to blush, but a quick glance to the side hides it well. Once she recovers she continues needling Ryuko, "Did you have a pillow with my face on it? Did you kiss it every night and pray that someday the great Jakazure might lock eyes with you during one of her performances?"

"Dream on. That was really specific; I bet you get off surrounded in your own merchandise like the narcissistic ass you are."

"Never thought of that; I bet if I sold a recording of myself doing that I'd have enough cash to buy 4 more cars like this. Imagine, I could get more money than you've ever seen in your entire life just by masturbating."

"Bet you're too coward to actually do it."

Before Ryuko can goad her on anymore Satsuki intervenes again, reaching forward to tap Nonon's shoulder. "Make sure you take us to the warehouse. We should get off the main road soon."

Nonon looks a bit surprised by the request, pulling her attention away from Ryuko to glance curiously at Satsuki. "I thought you wanted to go to the infirmary?"

"An infirmary. Not one anywhere near home. This is private business."

"I guess you were serious about this being a personal project of yours." Nonon mutters, and switches on her turn signal, veering sharply across two lanes, nearly slamming into two other cars in the process. A chorus of honks and swears follows them off the highway, to which Nonon smiles and in turn replies with a middle finger out the window.

"Christ you're going to get us killed." Ryuko breaths once the car straightens out again.

"It's their fault if they slam into me. There's enough C-4 in the trunk to wipe out a small city." Nonon responds idly. Ryuko blanches at the thought and sends Satsuki a panicked look. Satsuki however, remains as placid as ever, most likely quite accustomed to daily near death experiences.

After about ten more minutes of Nonon blasting her playlists, the three finally arrive at an eerily desolated shack. The path to reach their destination consisted of several convoluted (and debatably legal) U-turns and shortcuts, ending on a dimly lit gravel road. As they exit the car Ryuko glances around, eyeing the tall trees encircling the area warily.

"We're quite literally in the middle of nowhere. Relax." Satsuki advises, leading the way to the door.

The building looks like it's only a few more months away from crumbling apart. Masses of ivy tendrils entwine themselves along the window frames, threatening to swallow up the entire structure if left unchecked. The door groans once it's pushed open, and Ryuko swears she spots a few splinters of wood flake off under Satsuki's light touch.

Satsuki and Nonon enter first, feeling through the pitch black darkness until one of them brushes against the light switch. A chandelier flickers above them, illuminating the entrance room in a yellow glow. Despite its decrepit exterior, the shack is surprisingly well maintained inside.

"Is this your second home or something?" Ryuko asks as she enters, staring at the recently furnished walls and pristine pieces of furniture positioned throughout the room.

"As I called it on the way here, it is my warehouse. I needed my own base of operations, completely separate from the Kiryuin network."

"So this is like your secret headquarters?"

"In a manner of speaking, yes. And I trust that its location will *remain* a secret." Satsuki warns.

"Yeah yeah I know." Ryuko dismisses the threat with a wave of her hand and plops down on one of the leather armchairs, sprawling her limbs out and sighing in content.

Satsuki runs a hand through her own hair, frowning when her fingers emerge covered in soot. "I'm going to clean up a bit. Please try not to kill each other while I'm away."

Nonon, who's taken up residence on the largest couch in the room, raises her head to glance at Ryuko, "No promises my lady. But I'll try."

Ryuko's too tired to respond verbally, simply flipping Nonon the bird and slumping back against the chair. Satisfied for the time being, Satsuki turns and disappears down the hall.

Once the clack of her heels against the floorboards fades, Nonon turns to Ryuko, a mixture of curiosity and disgust on her face. Ryuko feels her gaze and turns to face her as well. It's the first time she's gotten a good look at Nonon, now that there's no longer a wall dividing them and the tacky lighting of the car is gone.

The first thing she notices is her comically petite build. Ryuko immediately concludes that she must have been balanced on some sort of adult car seat; there's no way in hell her head would've cleared the steering wheel otherwise. Even now, lounging out to her full height on the couch, Nonon barely takes up two whole cushions.

The second most glaring characteristic is her fashion sense. She's got a black skull cap covering her bubblegum pink hair, with a few wild tufts poking out to frame her face. An oversized black shirt hangs over her shoulders; once she straightens a bit more Ryuko's able to make out what the text says.

"Fuck you! Fuck you fuckers fuck you fuck!" Ryuko reads aloud, "How charming."

"Lay off hoodlum, I was sleeping when Satsuki called me. How about a thank you for dragging myself out of bed, playing stake out all night, and saving your sorry ass."

"Thank you for nearly killing me with your bombs."

"You're fucking welcome." Nonon retorts, reclining back even further and crossing her legs.

Ryuko's eyes travel a bit lower; once the large t-shirt ends, all that's left in its wake are a pair of slender thighs. The expanse of uncovered skin ends just below her knees, cut off by leather

platform boots straight out of an S&M porno. Ryuko bites back a snicker at the sheer ridiculousness of the ensemble "Wow are you even wearing anything under that shirt?"

"Quit ogling me." Nonon snaps, tugging the shirt down to cover her knees, "You're two seconds away from a boot in your face." She emphasizes the threat with a firm stomp on the ground.

"Fine fine." Ryuko concedes, closing her eyes instead. They're both quiet for a moment, Ryuko amusing herself imagining Nonon as a midget dominatrix, and the latter examining Satsuki's "personal project." When Nonon speaks again, her voice has lost its harsh edge.

"So..what's the deal between you and my lady?"

"Ok please stop calling her that it's really weird. Makes you guys sound like something out of fifty shades of gray. Unless you two actually do have that whole mistress-pet dynamic going on."

Nonon's eyes narrow in irritation, "It's a title you cretin. I'd ask if you've ever heard of etiquette but I think I already know the answer. Now answer my question."

Ryuko lets out a long sigh and tilts her head in thought, "She showed up in my flat last week. Apparently everyone and their moms wants to drag my corpse to the Kiryuin doorstep. She offered to keep me breathing."

"Well she's right about the corpse part." Nonon nods, "But why is she helping you in the first place?"

"Fuck if I know. I'm not exactly in a position to turn down the offer, so she keeps me in the dark as much as she can. Although she did mention something about me burning the family to the ground, so that's kept my interest."

Nonon's eyes widen, but she doesn't comment on it.

"At first I thought she was being melodramatic, but the more time I spend around her, the more serious I think she was. She really seems to hate her mom huh? Bet she has some big mommy issues."

At that Nonon shoots her a fierce glare, "Shut up. Don't say shit like that around her."

Sensing that she hit a particularly dangerous nerve, Ryuko backs off, mumbling a half-hearted apology in the hopes that it will shut Nonon up.

Before another awkward silence occurs, Satsuki strides back into the room, looking completely revitalized. She's shed her damaged clothes, donning a navy button down and slim grey slacks. The outfit is unfairly tailored to accentuate every curve of her body. Between that and the sharp dip of the shirt collar, Ryuko's fighting to keep her gaze on her face.

"My eyes are up here Matoi."

Ryuko's head jerks up and she feels her cheeks heat up, "I was just trying to figure out how many meals I'd get if I sold that stupid outfit of yours."

"Of course. Anyway, Soroi should be here soon. He'll patch up that hand of yours, and we can be on our way."

"Halle-fucking-lujah."

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After an hour of what Satsuki had referred to as "proper medical treatment," (mostly consisting of Ryuko hissing and squirming away when Soroi attempted to stitch her wound), the three continue their drive back into the city. Nonon's grown increasingly irritable, making conversation impossible by blasting her stereo at the loudest possible volume. The music finally stops when she parks outside a gas station, tugging the key out of the ignition reluctantly.

"This is as far as I go. You can walk the rest of the way back to your flat, I'm not letting my baby get dinged up in this shithole." Nonon announces, flicking a switch to unlock the doors.

Ryuko's too exhausted for a comeback and merely nods, clambering out of the car on heavy feet.

Satsuki sighs and follows Ryuko out, "I'll make sure she doesn't collapse on the way."

Ryuko's about to protest, but the stubborn look she receives from Satsuki sucks the argument out of her. She shrugs and turns, leading the way.

"How's your hand?" Satsuki asks, sounding almost conversational as they walk. Ryuko flexes her fingers, wincing when a sharp pain flares up in her palm.

"Could be better. I'm just glad the blade didn't go all the way through."

Satsuki nods, looking considerably more at ease than usual. The two walk side by side down the street, approaching Ryuko's flat at a leisurely pace. It's nearly four in the morning by now, and the rest of the neighborhood has yet to begin to stir. Even as they reach the front door things remain quiet; a quick glance through the front window confirms that Mako's still sleeping.

"Well I suppose this is where I'll bid you adieu Matoi. Since you need time to heal, I won't be calling you anytime soon. Still, keep yourself on guard."

Ryuko sighs, rolling her eyes, "Yeah yeah whatever. I'm just gonna sleep for the next week."

Satsuki smirks, but says nothing in response, simply meeting Ryuko's gaze and holding it.

Ryuko stares right back, squinting a bit at the other woman's unwavering stare "As much as I'd love to spend the rest of the morning having a staring contest with you, I'm going to crash now." She announces, turning on her heel and reaching inside her coat pocket. Just as she

fishes out her keys and begins fiddling with the lock, she feels a sudden pressure against her back.

"You're incredibly easy to read you know." Satsuki murmurs, her mouth mere centimeters from the back of Ryuko's neck.

"I'd recommend making yourself a bit less predictable...for the sake of future assignments."

Ryuko represses a shudder at the sudden closeness, and swallows hard, squeezing the key in her hands until her knuckles turn white.

"Didn't ask for a performance review." She hisses back, fumbling to get the key into the lock. Satsuki places her hands on Ryuko's shoulders, rubbing against the knots of muscles with the pads of her thumbs.

"You're quite tense."

Ryuko bites her lip to hold back a groan, every joint in her body aching to melt under the gentle touch. The keys slip from her fingers and she braces herself against the door, "No shit Kiryuin, this isn't how I was expecting to spend my weekend."

Satsuki presses a bit closer, "You seemed to enjoy it though. Perhaps a life of organized crime is suited to you." She muses, pausing to nip at the shell of Ryuko's ear. Ryuko gasps and digs her nails into the door, a deep red blush rising up her neck. Satsuki lets out a hum of approval and trails her hands down Ryuko's sides, pausing at her waist to slip her fingers under her jacket. When Ryuko lets out a soft whine and arches her back, Satsuki drags her nails over her stomach, chuckling when the soft skin twitches under her touch.

Ryuko sucks in a quick breath, "Didn't know the deal included me being your part-time prostitute." She grunts, groaning when Satsuki's fingers dip below her waistband, lingering for a moment before pulling away again.

"It's not part of the deal." Satsuki replies, lazily tracing circles back up Ryuko's torso. "Merely a mutual interest I'm proposing."

Ryuko lets out a dry laugh, "You make it sound so boring. Isn't it normally a bad idea to mix business and pleasure?"

Satsuki sighs, "I see you don't quite grasp yet what it means to be part of a syndicate." She dips her head lower, mouthing at the exposed skin on Ryuko's neck, "This isn't strictly business Matoi. There's no divide between what I do in the boardroom and the bedroom. It's all to the same end."

Ryuko's knees go weak once Satsuki's lips and tongue begin their ministrations on her neck, "I s-see." She manages, her breathing quickly becoming erratic. In retaliation, she reaches around with her good hand and grabs a fistful of Satsuki's hair, tugging on it roughly, and holding her more firmly against her neck.

"Release me this instant." Satsuki hisses, shoving Ryuko against the door aggressively. Ryuko grunts in frustration but obeys, twisting around in an attempt to even the playing field. Satsuki's staring down at her, a fierce look burning behind her usual stoic face.

"You're an asshole." Ryuko growls, craning her head up a bit to glare. "But you're hot."

"And you're as eloquent with words as ever." Satsuki replies, eyeing Ryuko up and down.

"Shut the hell up."

Satsuki quirks an eyebrow, "Make me."

Ryuko practically lunges forward, her arms encircling the other woman and yanking her down to slam their mouths together. Satsuki doesn't seem the least bit surprised, meeting her lips with the same sort of feverish force. Ryuko's all teeth, nipping and biting at as much of Satsuki as she can. Satsuki makes a low noise at the back of her throat and traces along Ryuko's mouth with her tongue, only pulling away when Ryuko bites down on that as well.

"You're a horrid kisser Matoi." Satsuki snaps, running her now bleeding tongue over her own lips. "That was like being attacked by a rabid animal."

"You're no prize yourself." Ryuko shoots back, and tugs Satsuki back down again, using a less vicious approach this time. Their lips graze against each other lightly before Satsuki presses a hand around the back of Ryuko's neck and pulls her closer. Her grip is gentle but firm, and Ryuko's shorter frame easily fits against Satsuki's lean body. Ryuko makes a sound of satisfaction and adjusts her position to palm at Satsuki's breast through her clothing, squeezing gently and rubbing with her thumb. Satsuki exhales sharply and bumps foreheads with Ryuko, kissing her more insistently. Ryuko smirks against her lips and begins fiddling with the buttons of her shirt. She's barely undone the first one when she feels a knee jam itself between her own legs.

"F-fuck" Ryuko wheezes, immediately rolling her hips to grind against Satsuki.

"If you value your undamaged hand you'll quit undressing me." Satsuki warns, pressing with her leg enough for it to be painful. Ryuko nods wordlessly, immediately releasing her grip on the button she was working on.

"Smart girl." Satsuki murmurs, and leans forward to kiss her again, parting her lips gently. Ryuko pushes against her lips stubbornly, nearly head butting her in the process. Her fingers wander to Satsuki's collar, tugging on it firmly. Satsuki allows herself to be pulled in, only stopping when she feels Ryuko guiding her toward the door.

"Not today." She grunts, breaking the kiss and taking a deep breath. "I have a busy schedule." She takes a step back, quickly combing her fingers through her hair and straightening her shirt. Ryuko whines when she pulls back, arching her hips up impatiently.

"I'll be in touch." Satsuki says, smiling at the dazed look on Ryuko's face.

Ryuko's left standing on her porch with her mouth half-open, shamelessly watching Satsuki saunter down the street. She bites her lower lip, feeling a surge of excitement stronger than anything a few thousand explosions gave her.

Chapter End Notes

Nonon driving a tricked out rolls royce and wearing knee-high black leather boots is all I ever needed. Also the music group she mentions is totally legit and you guys should all listen to heavy metal acapella because it is an experience.

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